

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 were pending in the application. Claims 1, 2, 7, 8, 13, and 14 have been amended, claims 19-21 have been added and claims 3, 9, and 15 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Therefore, claims 1-2, 4-8, 10-14, and 16-21 are pending in the application and are submitted for reconsideration.

This amendment adds, changes and deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

In the Office Action, claims 1-18 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,799,156 ("Shavit"). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Each of the independent claims 1, 7, and 13 recite, *inter alia*, an improved supply chain framework in which independent stores (for example, independently owned stores of a franchise) and other participants (for example, distributors and suppliers) in the supply chain are able to get reports that are formatted according to a coding scheme unique to the user. Since the independent stores of a franchise are often run by very different operations and managements, this provides a convenient and effective supply chain framework whereby each user can receive a report that is automatically formatted using a coding scheme unique to that user. These recited features are not disclosed or suggested by the applied prior art. Note that the independence of these stores, distributors and suppliers means that but for this reporting operation, they would not have access to this data in their own unique formats.

Specifically, Shavit discloses an interactive system for on-line electronic commerce communications between a plurality of buyers and sellers. See col. 2, lines 15-20. The cited portion col. 11, lines 44-47 of Shavit discloses that each user has a userid and password and based on the userid each user is provided access to a different set of services. Nowhere does Shavit teach or suggest a supply chain reporting system in a supply chain framework in which the reports are automatically generated using a coding scheme unique to each user who could be from a store, a distributor, or a supplier. Accordingly, at least these recited features in the independent claims are not disclosed or suggested by Shavit.

With respect to the Office Action's use of design choice as an argument, applicants submit that the particular advantages of the claimed invention that allow for automatic particularized reporting to the various users of a supply chain framework, particularly where a plurality of the users are independent, render the use of design choice as an inappropriate basis for rejecting these claims. Applicants respectfully request that an appropriate reference be cited if the rejection is to be maintained on this basis.

The dependent claims are also patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims on which they ultimately depend. In addition, they recite additional patentable features when considered as a whole. For example, the new claims 19-21 recite that the data is parsed to match each supply chain participant and thereby automatically generate the report format utilizing the coding scheme unique to each user. This recited feature is also not disclosed by the applied prior art and provides an additional reason for the patentability of these claims.

In view of the above, applicants believe that the application is now in condition for allowance. An indication of the same is respectfully requested. The examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview or an examiner's amendment would advance the prosecution of the case.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

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